

editorial is discussed the proposal which at that time had come before our Committee and we had had open hearings on the right of the people to know, and the *Post* went on to say that our proposal would allow the legislature to create exceptions to the general policy that the meetings and records of all governmental bodies will be open to the public. Those exceptions would protect such matters as individual tax returns, welfare rolls, and all of those dealing with personnel which should be closed to the public, and any other matter which in the general public interest should have privacy.

But there is an inherent right of all citizens to know what their government is doing, and sometimes governmental officials in the conduct of their offices act as though it is their own private business when it is the people's business.

We think that this is a very healthy check and control on an arbitrary and capricious action which may ensue from governmental conduct of the people's business. And therefore we respectfully request this Constitutional Convention to vote for this recommendation.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Willoner.

DELEGATE WILLONER: I yield three minutes to Delegate Sherbow.

DELEGATE SHERBOW: Mr. Chairman and ladies and gentlemen, I rise to support this amendment.

In all of the deliberations we keep in mind the fact that full power stems from the people. We give government tremendous power, and government acts, and then there are individuals who come in contact and in conflict with the government, and we surround them very properly with every conceivable kind of proper safeguard.

This is right. But then there is in government what is almost sometimes inconceivably hard to penetrate, and that is called by some "faceless bureaucracy." How does an individual, whether he be a small man or a big man, find out what is really going on in government? He cannot do it by himself. And what distinguishes this country from most of the others of the world is the fact that in this country we have one of the most vigilant sources of effort to find out and to know on behalf of those people, and that is the press.

The newspapers, radio, television, all news media, are there on the alert. Sometimes we may think they go too far. If they do, they are held accountable, but they are the ones

who find out and publish for us to know that which is our own business.

We even go so far in Maryland—and we are different from other states—so as to protect them in their sources of information. This is good, but now all that we are asked to do is to say that where government is concerned, we the people have the right to know, and the legislature has the corresponding obligation to protect that which needs protection, which Delegate Willoner has so carefully explained, so that we know that those things which should allow the individual to be protected against public disclosure will be restricted from public disclosure.

This amendment presents to us one opportunity to put into the constitution the requirement that we the people have the right to know under proper safeguards.

I hope you will vote for this amendment.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Willoner.

You have left just about four minutes.

DELEGATE WILLONER: Mr. Chairman, Delegate Gallagher, Delegate Beachley and Delegate Boileau, who are all to speak to it; we will yield the balance of our time, and I assume we are prepared to vote on the matter.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Kiefer.

DELEGATE KIEFER: Mr. Chairman and ladies and gentlemen of the Committee, I rise to oppose this amendment, and request that you vote it down. It looks as though I am again speaking against motherhood and in favor of sin. Please believe me, I am not. I am all in favor of motherhood, but I must suggest to you that before motherhood there should be some decent interval when you have the benefit of clergy, otherwise you produce something that may not be what you had hoped for. I am afraid we may have it here.

We all got into this program in October with a great deal of enthusiasm. Delegate Hostetter brought from Washington a group of experts who were prepared to tell us how this thing was such a wonderful plan. In the first place, we produced Congressman Rumsfeld of Illinois, and the first thing he said was this: "I have been advised by the Legislative Reference Service of the Library of Congress that there are no state constitutional provisions in this area in any of the fifty states." So you will be making new law if you put this in.

Delegate Maurer has suggested that New York did a fine, beautiful thing. You know